HE WON SOME SORT OF AWARD FOR A NOVEL WHEN HE WAS A JUNIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL AND MADE IT INTO TO A GOOD UNIVERSITY, BUT DROPPED OUT AND NOW PASSES MOST OF HIS TIME AT HIS DESK, RARELY GOING OUTSIDE.
HE LIVES WITH MY GRANDMA, IN HER ATTIC,
My uncle as a kid.
MY UNCLE, SHOUICHI-KUN, MY MOM'S LITTLE BROTHER, IS 23 THIS YEAR,
My mom, when she was younger.
MUMBLING ABOUT THINGS I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND LIKE THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COUNTRY,
ガリ ガリ
HE SPENDS HIS DAYS CHEWING ON SWEET GOLDEN CANDY MY GRANDMA BUYS HIM EVERY DAY,
PUFFING AWAY AT CIGARETTES HE STOLE FROM GRANDPA, (WHO HAS GIVEN UP AND STARTED BUYING EXTRA JUST FOR HIM)
HEY THERE, MIKA-CHAN.

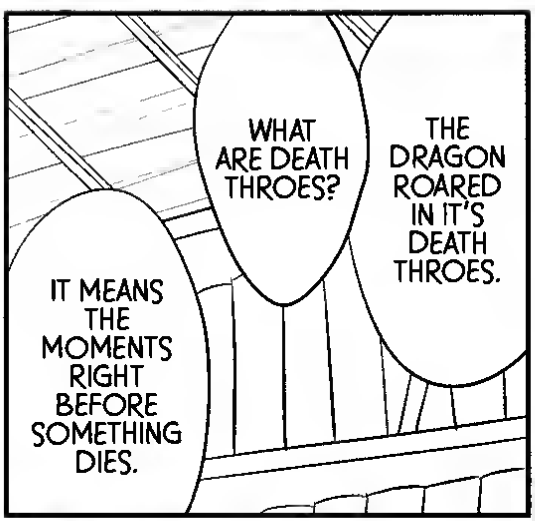
Golden Candy, Starry Smoke
金色の飴 星の煙
Fumi Fumiko
ふみふみこ
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT WHILE DOING STUFF LIKE THIS TO ME, A 6TH GRADER?
MIKA-CHAN, YOU'RE MY ONLY ALLY.

HEY, SHOUICHI -KUN...
BY THE WAY, I LOVE SHOUICHI-KUN
WHAT IS IT, MIKA-CHAN?
AND NOT JUST SHOUICHI-KUN, I ALSO LOVE HIS ROOM AND THE MOOD SURROUNDING HIM.
WHAT DO CIGARETTES TASTE LIKE?
I'D RATHER BE HERE THAN AROUND MOM, WHO'S ALWAYS NAGGING, OR DAD, WHO'S ALWAYS TIRED,
LET ME THINK... I GUESS YOU COULD SAY IT GIVES OFF AN ADULT FLAVOR.
OR MY ANNOYING CLASSMATES..!

HE WOULD SAY THAT, AND HE WOULD TAKE HIS CIGARETTE, WHICH HAD GOTTEN SO SMALL IT BARELY WENT PAST HIS FINGERS,
IT'S STILL A LITTLE TOO SOON FOR YOU TO TRY THEM, I THINK.
AND AS SOON AS HE PUT IT OUT,
YOU HAVEN'T GROWN ANY HAIR YET, AFTER ALL.
HE WOULD BEGIN ATTENDING TO ME AGAIN.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?
JUST THEN,
AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE DRAGON, WHO WAS AS BIG AS A BUILDING, WAS ABOUT TO GET ME, A HUGE FLAME ENVELOPED HIM,

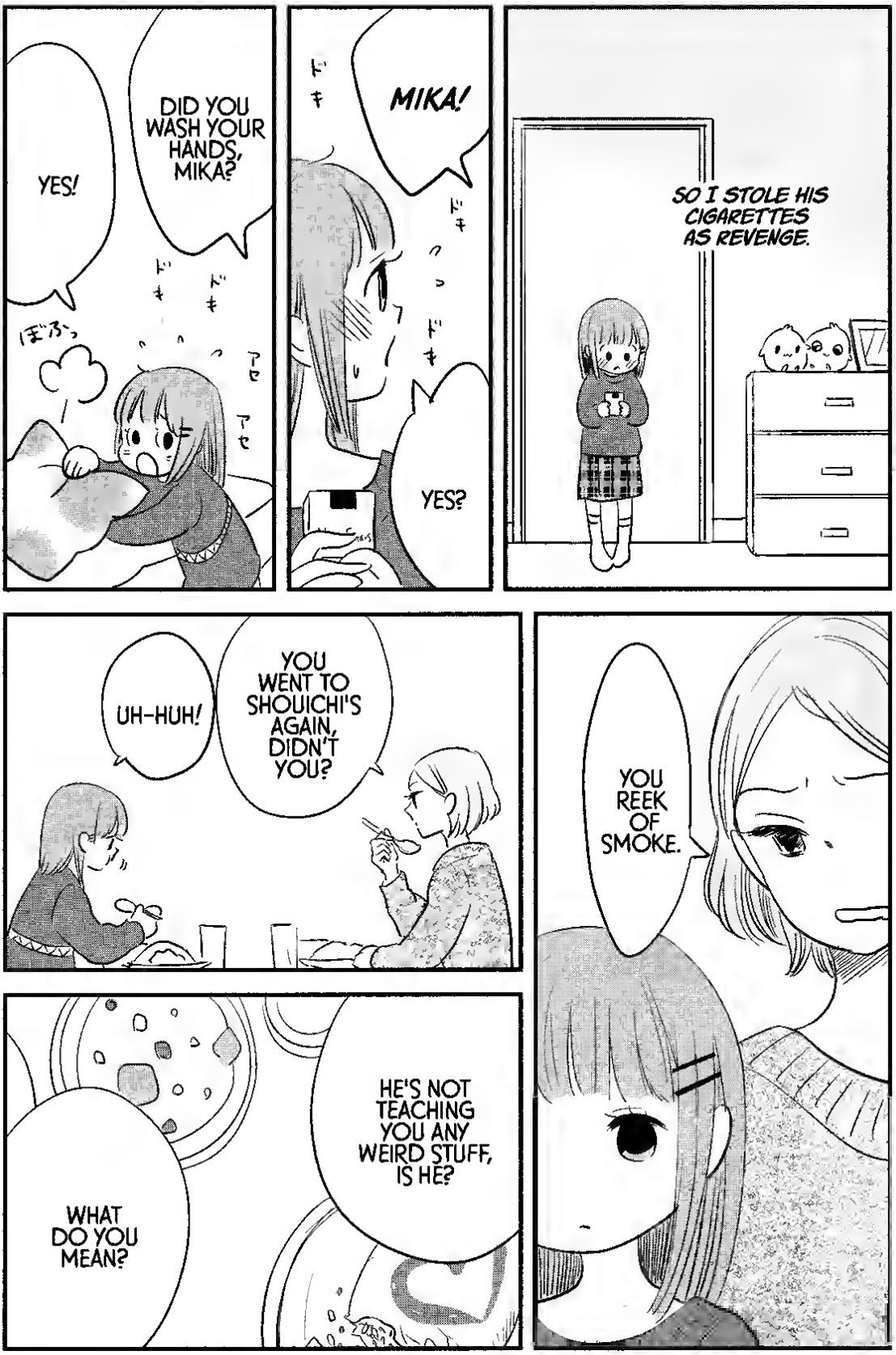
AND THEN?

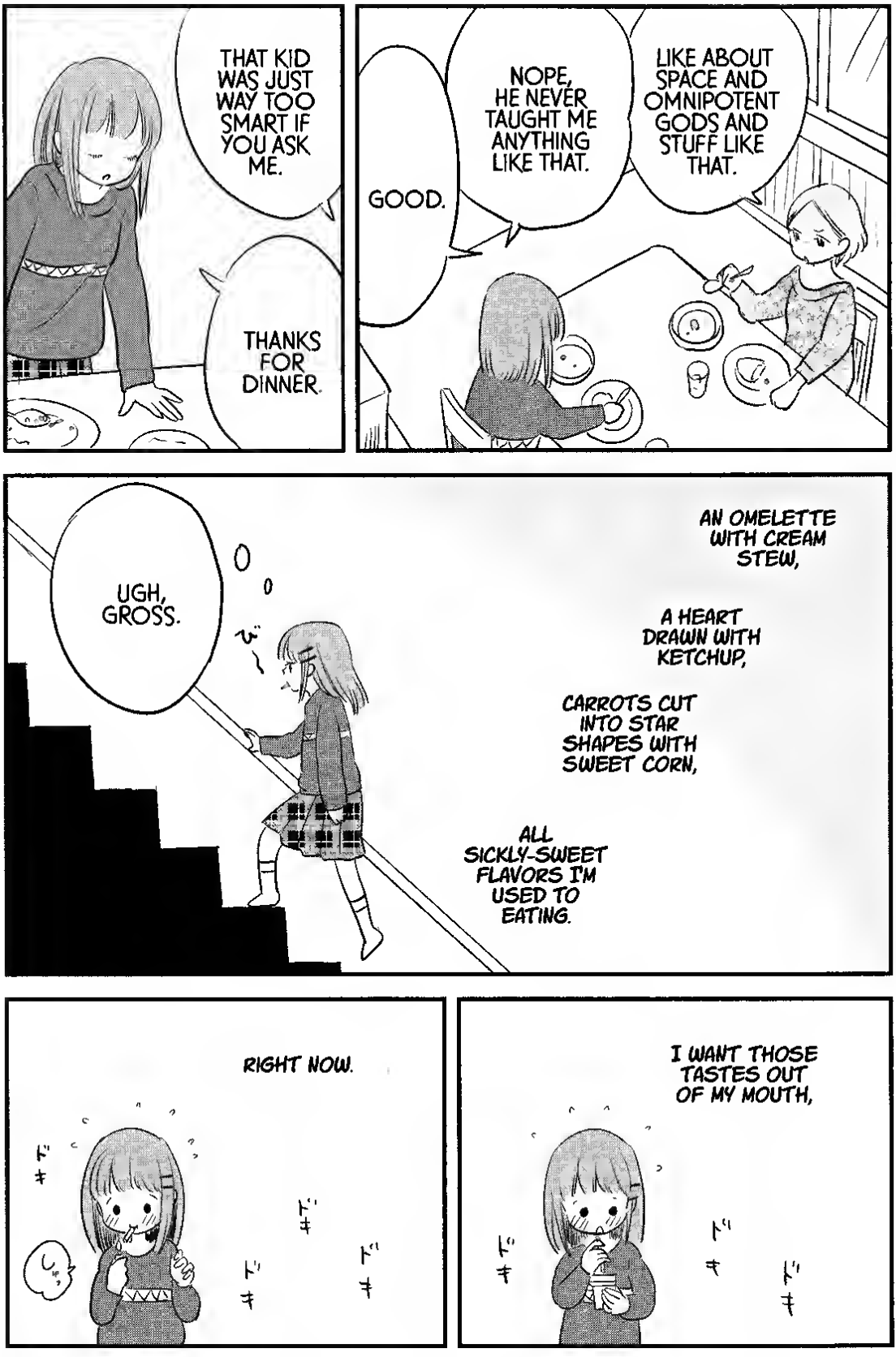

WHAT ARE DEATH THROES?
THE DRAGON ROARED IN IT'S DEATH THROES.
IT MEANS THE MOMENTS RIGHT BEFORE SOMETHING DIES.

RRRAAAAAAAAA

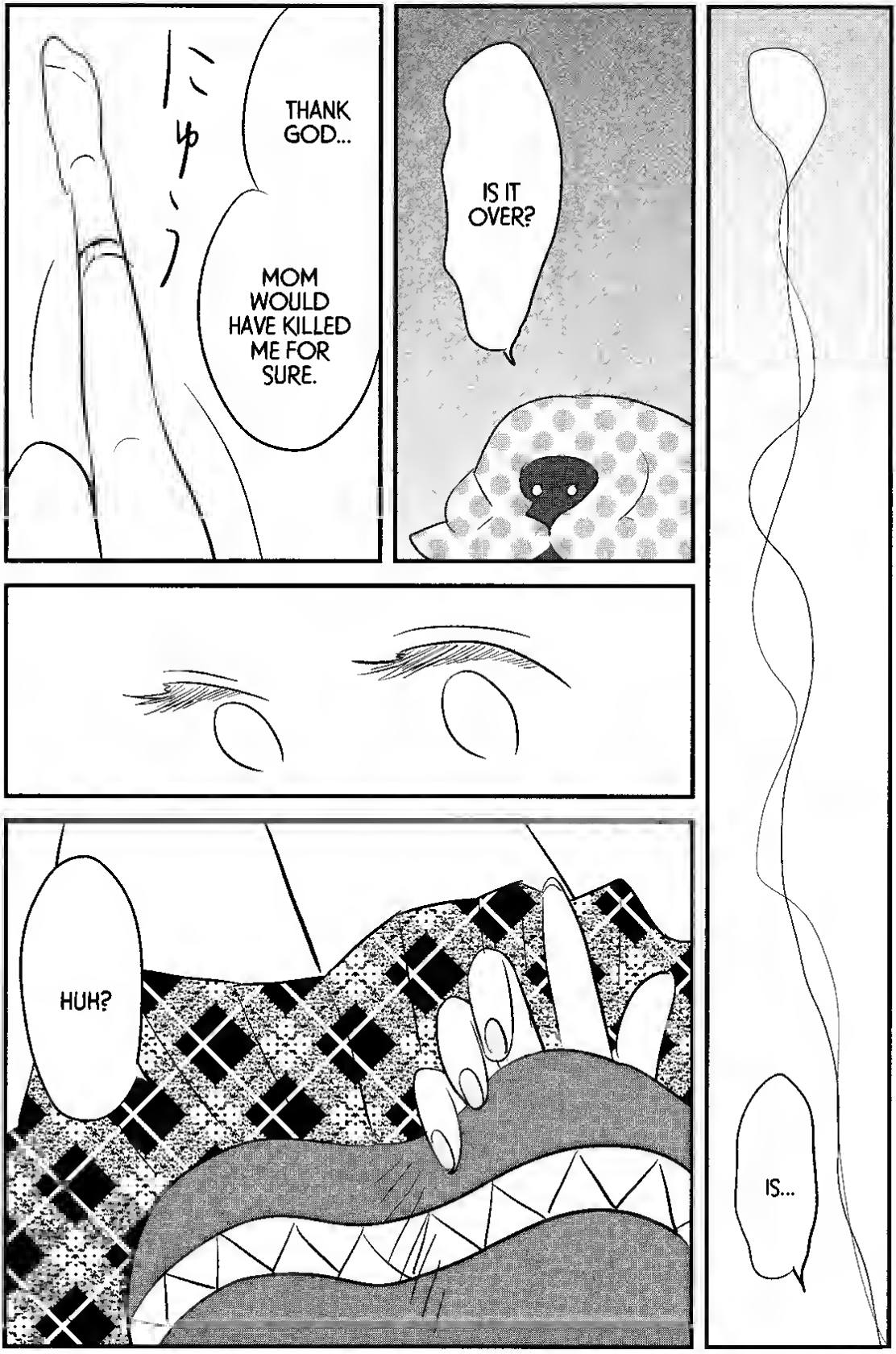
SHOCKED, I TURNED AROUND, AND STANDING THERE...

WHY?
I SWALLOWED MY BREATH, AND THEN...
STOP!
WAS AN UNBELIEVABLY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.
Mngh.
ONLY ME.
SHOUICHI-KUN'S LIES AND INSENSITIVITY PUT ME IN A REALLY BAD MOOD
TO ENJOY SUCH A FAKE FAIRYTALE...
THAT WAS ENOUGH.
I'M SHOUICHI-KUN'S ONLY ALLY, RIGHT?


DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS, MIKA?
YES!
ドキ
ドキ
ぼふっ
アセ
アセ
MIKA!
ドキ
ドキッ
YES?
SO I STOLE HIS CIGARETTES AS REVENGE.
YOU WENT TO SHOUICHI'S AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU?
UH-HUH!
YOU REEK OF SMOKE.
HE'S NOT TEACHING YOU ANY WEIRD STUFF, IS HE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


THAT KID WAS JUST WAY TOO SMART IF YOU ASK ME.
THANKS FOR DINNER.
GOOD.
NOPE, HE NEVER TAUGHT ME ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
LIKE ABOUT SPACE AND OMNIPOTENT GODS AND STUFF LIKE THAT.
UGH, GROSS.
びー
AN OMELETTE WITH CREAM STEW,
A HEART DRAWN WITH KETCHUP,
CARROTS CUT INTO STAR SHAPES WITH SWEET CORN,
ALL SICKLY-SWEET FLAVORS I'M USED TO EATING.
I WANT THOSE TASTES OUT OF MY MOUTH,
ドキ
ドキ
ドキ
RIGHT NOW.
ドキ
ドキ
ドキ
しゃっ

MGH.
IT'S KINDA SWEET.
HUH,
THE FLAVOR IS WAY DIFFERENT THAN I EXPECTED
もく
もく
もく
AAAH!
SMOKE!
A FIRE?
NO, WAIT, BEFORE THAT...
THERE'S SMOKE EVERYWHERE!
MOM'S GOING TO BE REALLY ANGRY!
IF SHE FINDS OUT ABOUT THE CIGARETTES,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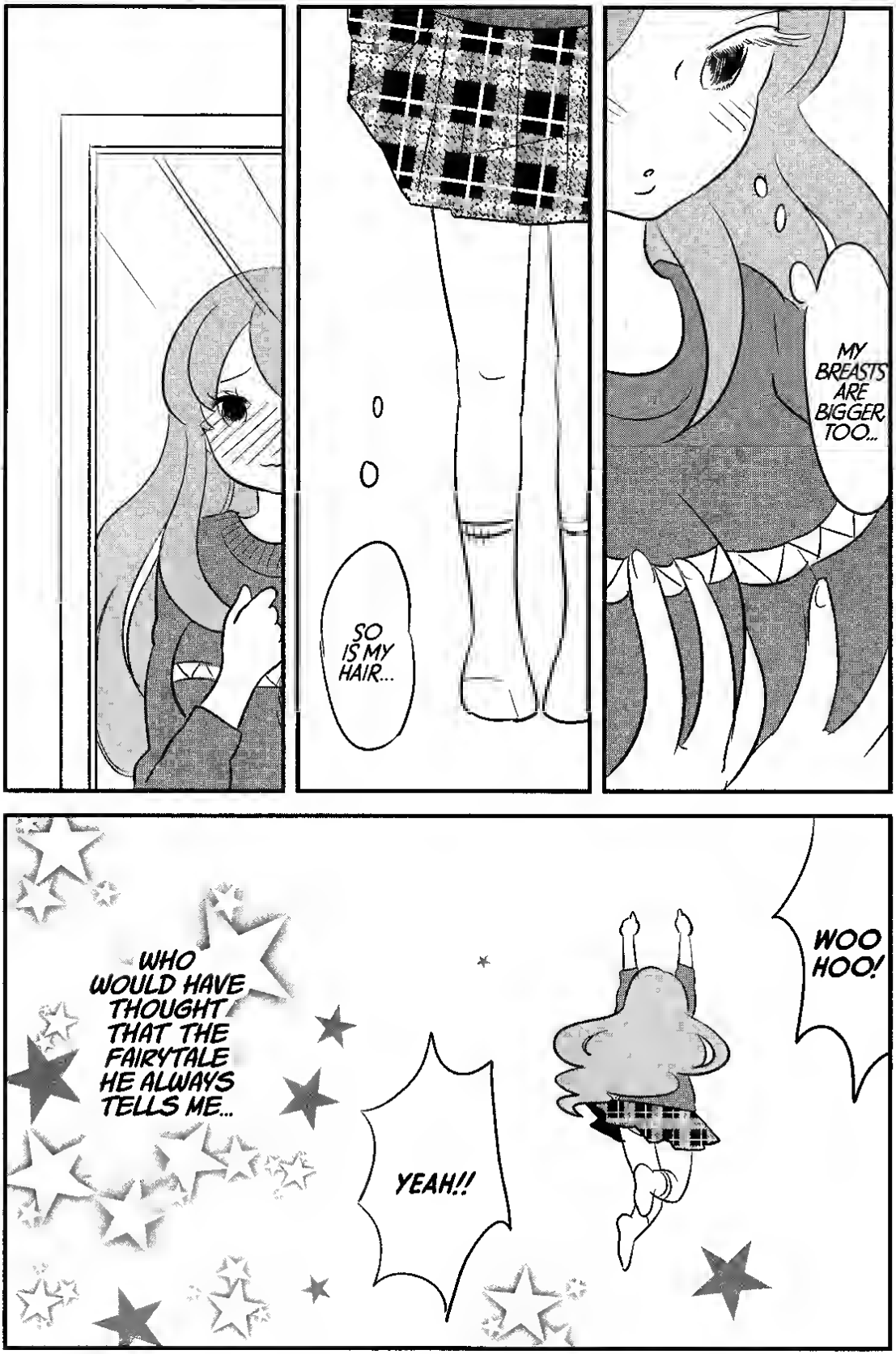
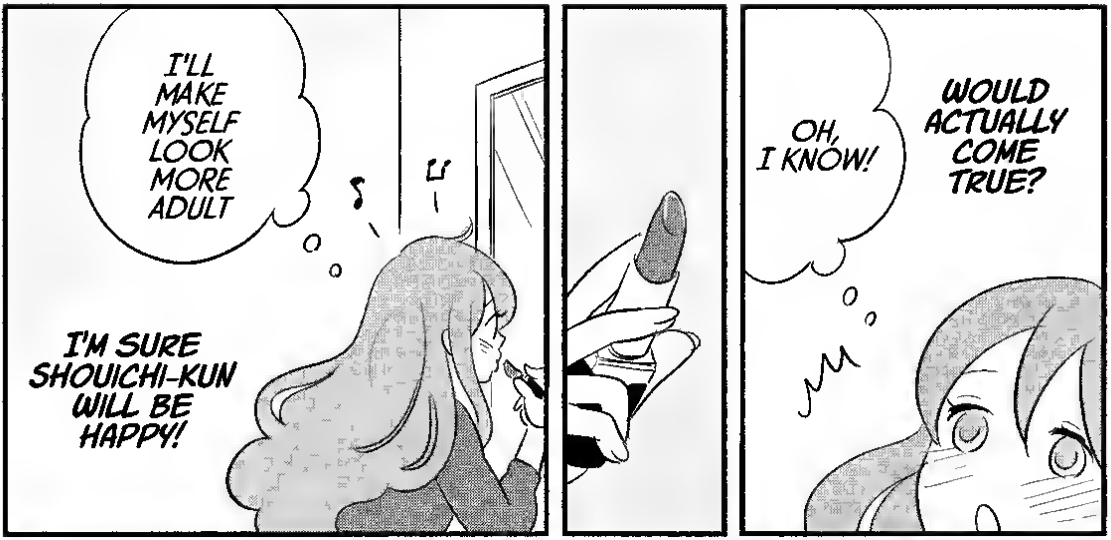
THANK GOD...
MOM WOULD HAVE KILLED ME FOR SURE.
IS IT OVER?
HUH?
IS...

I'M BIGGER...
え
HUH?
WHAT?!

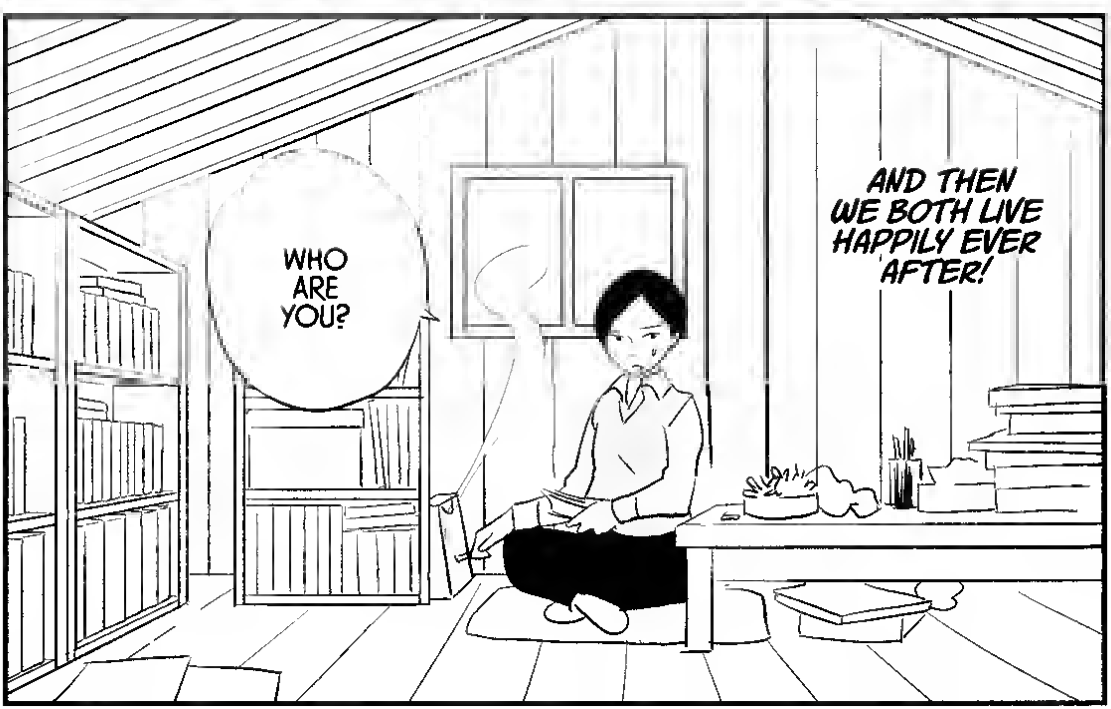

MY BREASTS ARE BIGGER, TOO...
SO IS MY HAIR...
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE FAIRYTALE HE ALWAYS TELLS ME...
YEAH!!
WOO HOO!



AFTER A LOT OF TWISTS AND TURNS, I LEARN HOW TO USE MAGIC AND WHEN SHOUICHI-KUN IS IN A DESPERATE SITUATION, I USE MY FLAME MAGIC TO DEFEAT THE DRAGON, WHO ROARS IN IT'S DEATH THROES, AND THEN, AND THEN..

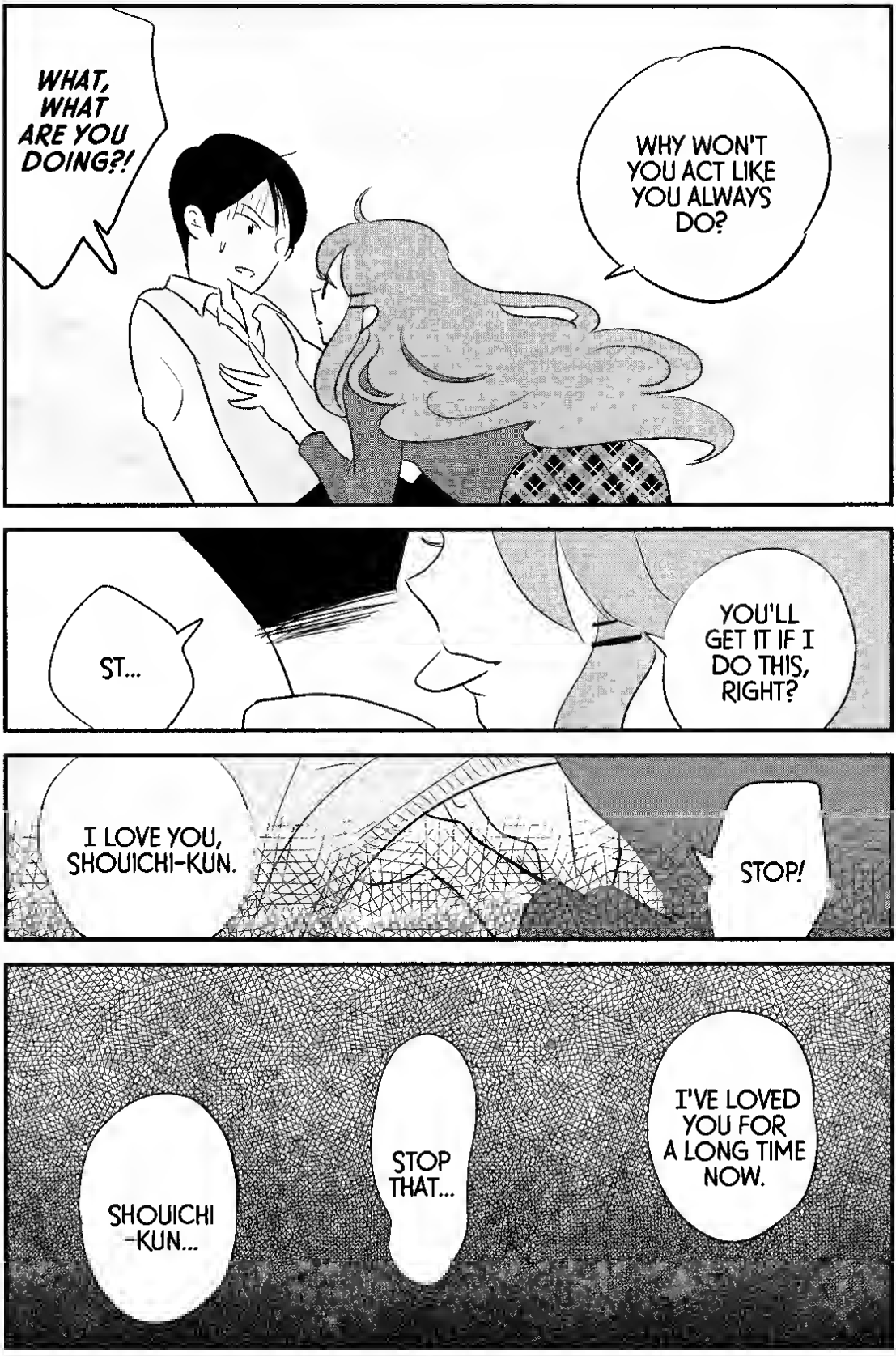
AFTER THAT, WITH BARELY ENOUGH TIME TO CATCH A BREATH, A MESSENGER FROM THE LAND OF MAGIC WILL APPEAR AND TELL US THAT A HUGE DRAGON IS ATTACKING THEIR COUNTRY AND THEY NEED OUR HELP. AFTER GATHERING OUR RESOLVE, WE HEAD OUT ON OUR JOURNEY...

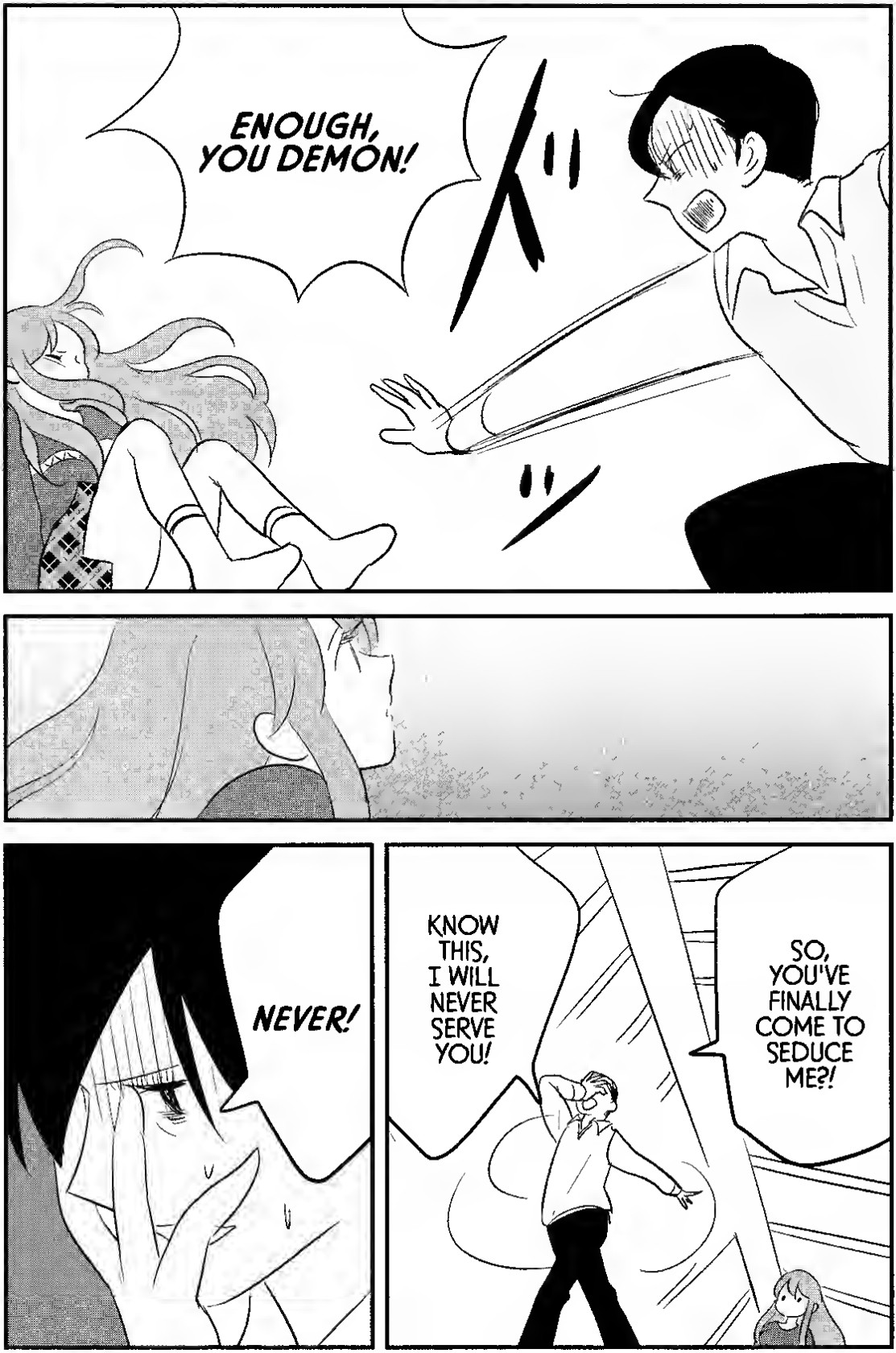
WITH ONE LOOK, HE'LL KNOW IT'S ME AND SAY, "YOU'VE FINALLY BECOME AN ADULT! I'VE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT!" AND THEN, IN A FIT OF JOY, HE WILL TAKE MY HAND, GIVE ME OUR PROMISED KISS, AND LOVE ME FIERCELY.

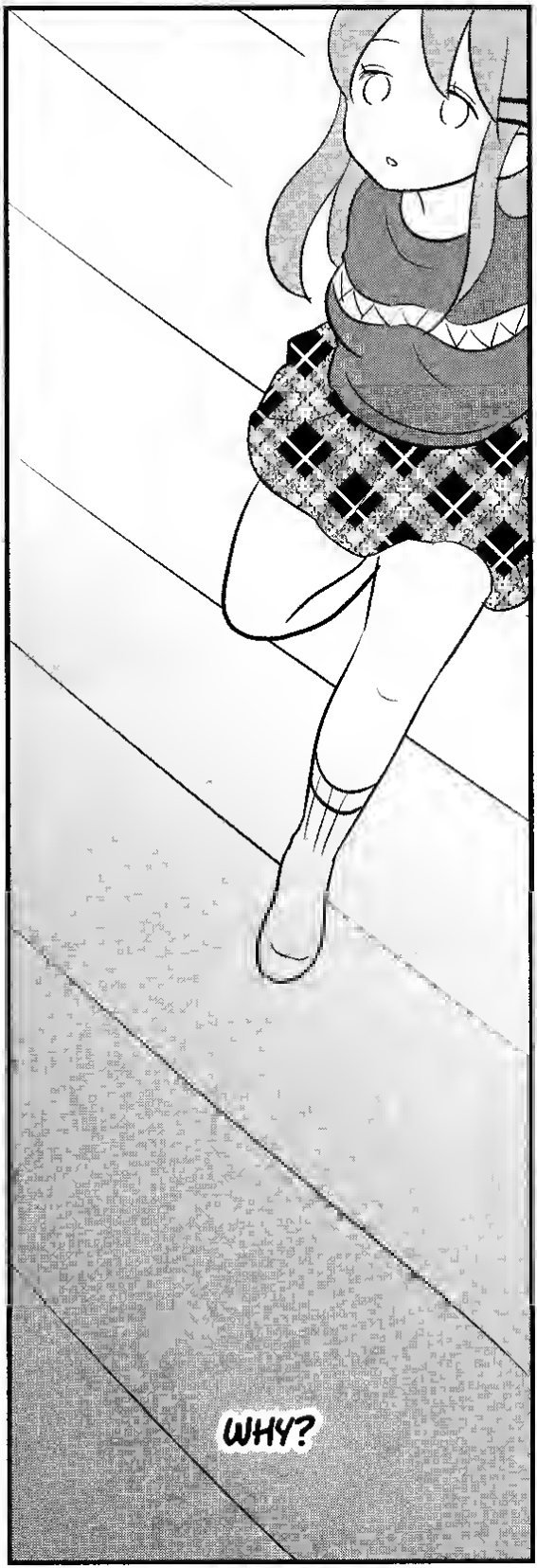


IT'S...
IT'S ME, I SWEAR!
CUT IT OUT OR I'LL CONSIDER THIS TRES-PASSING.
IT'S TRUE THAT YOU DO LOOK LIKE MIKA, BUT SHE'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO BEING THAT OLD,
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU LEARNED SO MUCH ABOUT MIKA,
は？
I TURNED INTO AN ADULT!
IT'S ME, MIKA!
MY BODY CHANGED INTO THIS AFTER SMOKING YOUR CIGAR-ETTES!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'M CALLING THE POLICE.
YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME, WILL YOU?
BUT THERE'S NO WAY SUCH AN UNREALISTIC THING COULD HAPPEN.

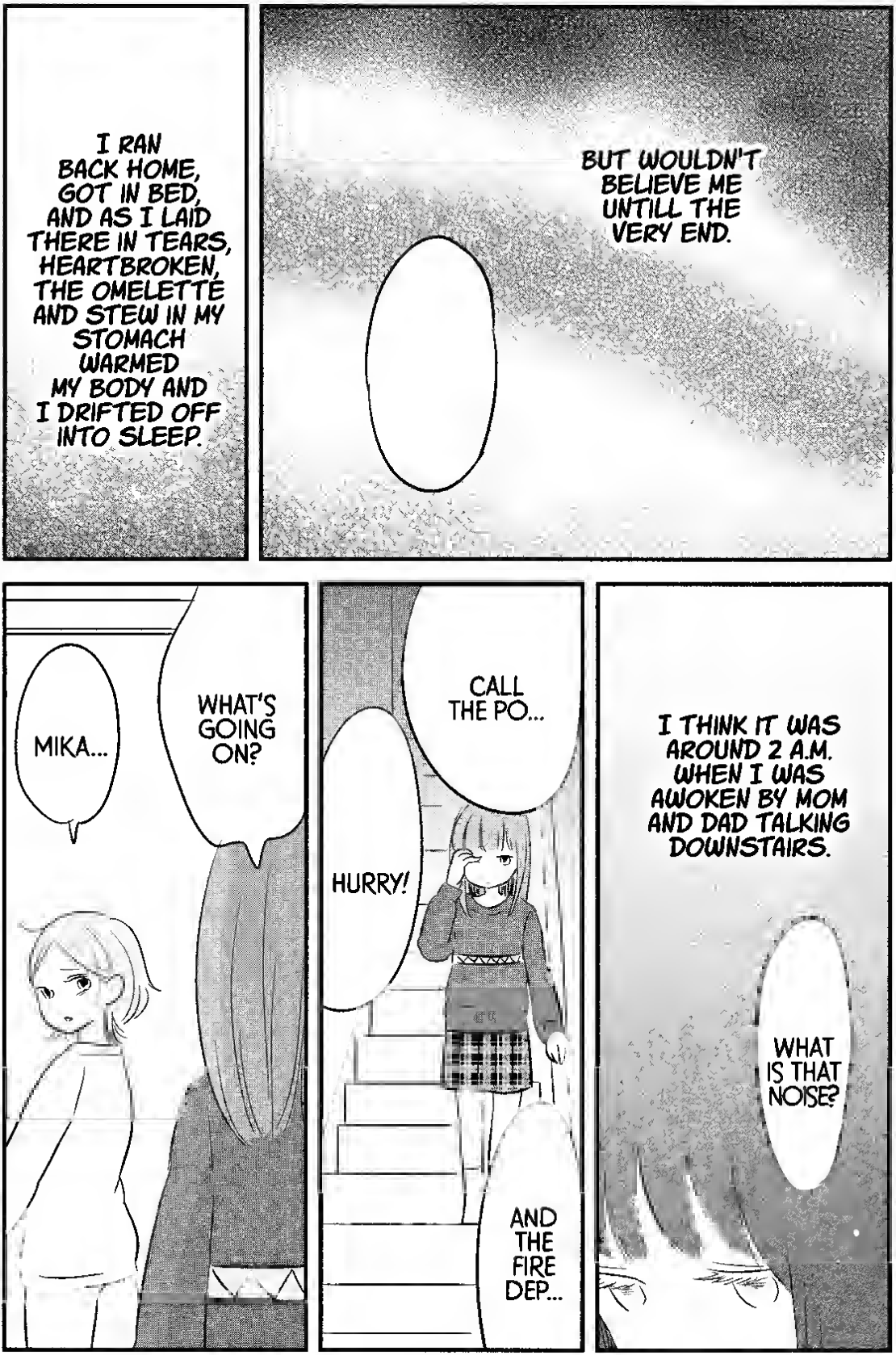

WHAT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHY WON'T YOU ACT LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO?
ST...
YOU'LL GET IT IF I DO THIS, RIGHT?
I LOVE YOU, SHOUICHI-KUN.
STOP!
SHOUICHI -KUN...
STOP THAT...
I'VE LOVED YOU FOR A LONG TIME NOW.

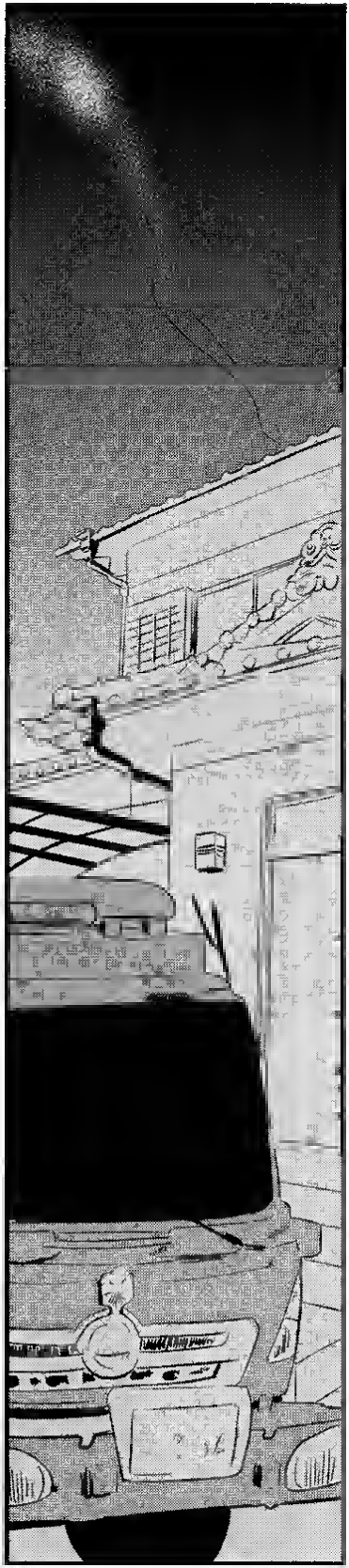

ENOUGH, YOU DEMON!
SO, YOU'VE FINALLY COME TO SEDUCE ME?!
KNOW THIS, I WILL NEVER SERVE YOU!
NEVER!


WHY?

HOW DISGUSTING!

THE BARRIER!
ふ ふ ふ ふ
I MUST STRENGTHEN THE SURROUND-INGS!
TO THINK YOU EVEN MANAGED TO INTRUDE ON THIS HOLY LAND...
THE BARRIER NEEDS TO BE STRON-GER!
SHOU-ICHI -KUN...
IT'S ME...
IT'S MIKA.
HE BELIEVES IN DEMONS,

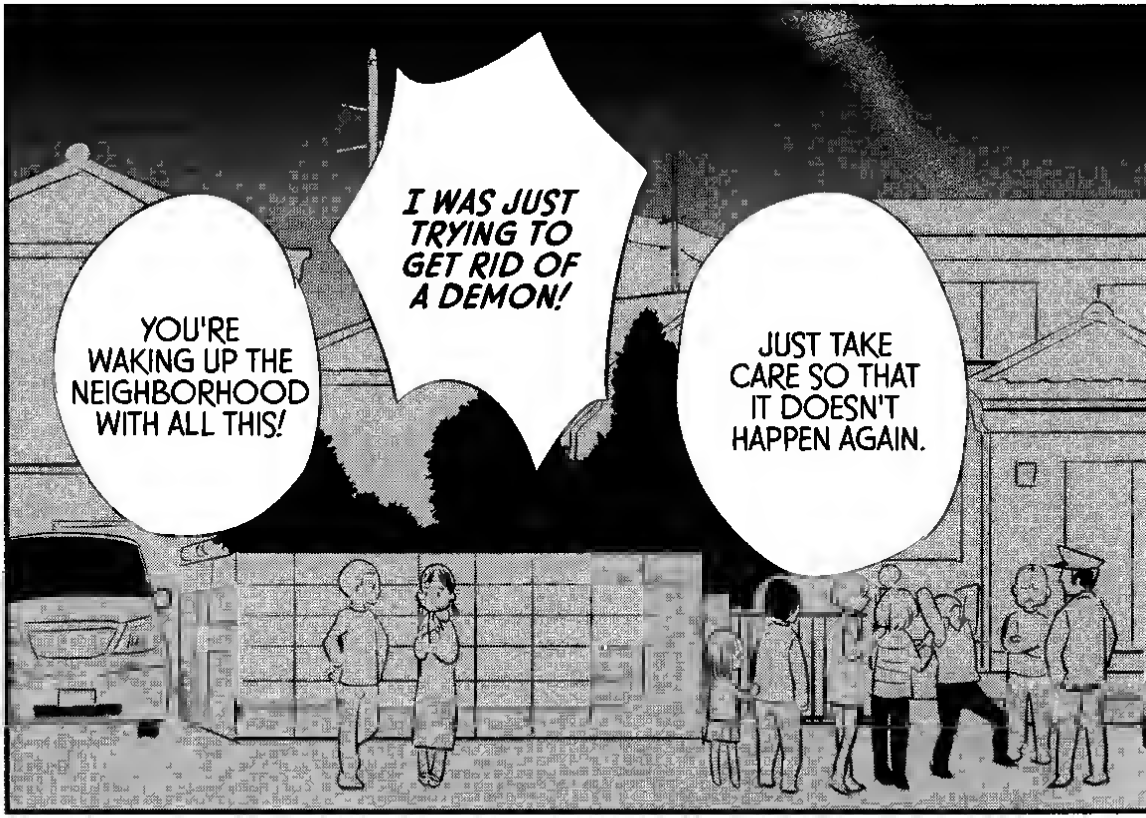

I RAN BACK HOME, GOT IN BED, AND AS I LAID THERE IN TEARS, HEARTBROKEN, THE OMELETTE AND STEW IN MY STOMACH WARMED MY BODY AND I DRIFTED OFF INTO SLEEP.
BUT WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME UNTILL THE VERY END.
I THINK IT WAS AROUND 2 A.M. WHEN I WAS AWOKEN BY MOM AND DAD TALKING DOWNSTAIRS.
WHAT IS THAT NOISE?
CALL THE PO...
HURRY!
AND THE FIRE DEP...
MIKA...
WHAT'S GOING ON?

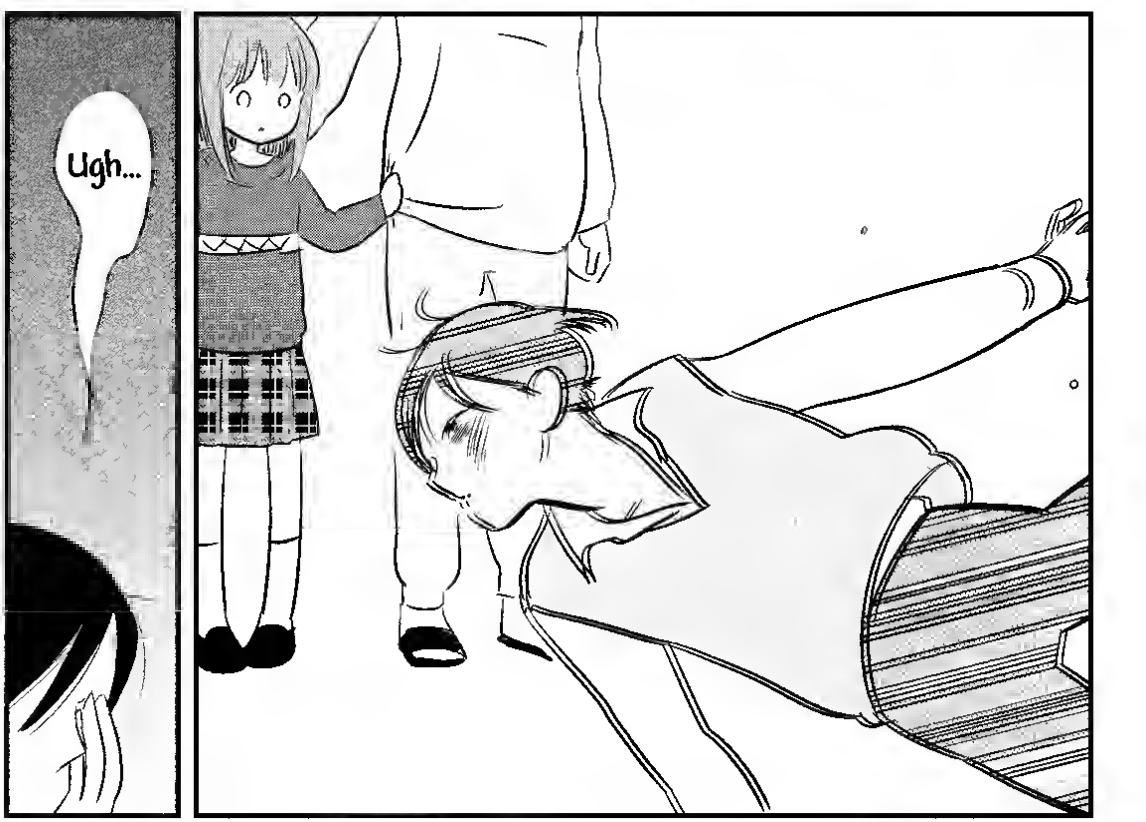


AH!
THERE'S BEEN SOME TROUBLE,
OVER AT GRAND-MA'S...

MY BODY IS BACK TO NORMAL.

OHHH, IT WAS SHOUICHI-KUN, WAS IT? HAHA.
IT WAS A DEMON!
THE FLAME FROM A CANDLE LIT THE CURTAINS ON FIRE.
YOU KNOW YOU DID IT, GODDAMNIT!
IT WASN'T ME!
A DEMON!
LUCKILY, IT WAS JUST A SMALL FIRE.
WE'RE SO, SO SORRY.


YOU'RE WAKING UP THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH ALL THIS!
I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET RID OF A DEMON!
JUST TAKE CARE SO THAT IT DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN.


Ugh...

OH.
AAAA

HE MADE ME FEEL REALLY BAD.
I WAS SCARED...
WITH THAT, I PRETENDED TO CRY.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US SOONER?!
AND MOM AND DAD GOT SUPER ANGRY AT ME.
MY UNCLE WAS TAKEN AWAY BY THE POLICEMAN,
I...

HEHE...
YOU THINK SO?
IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.
MY LITTLE MIKA IS ALREADY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL!
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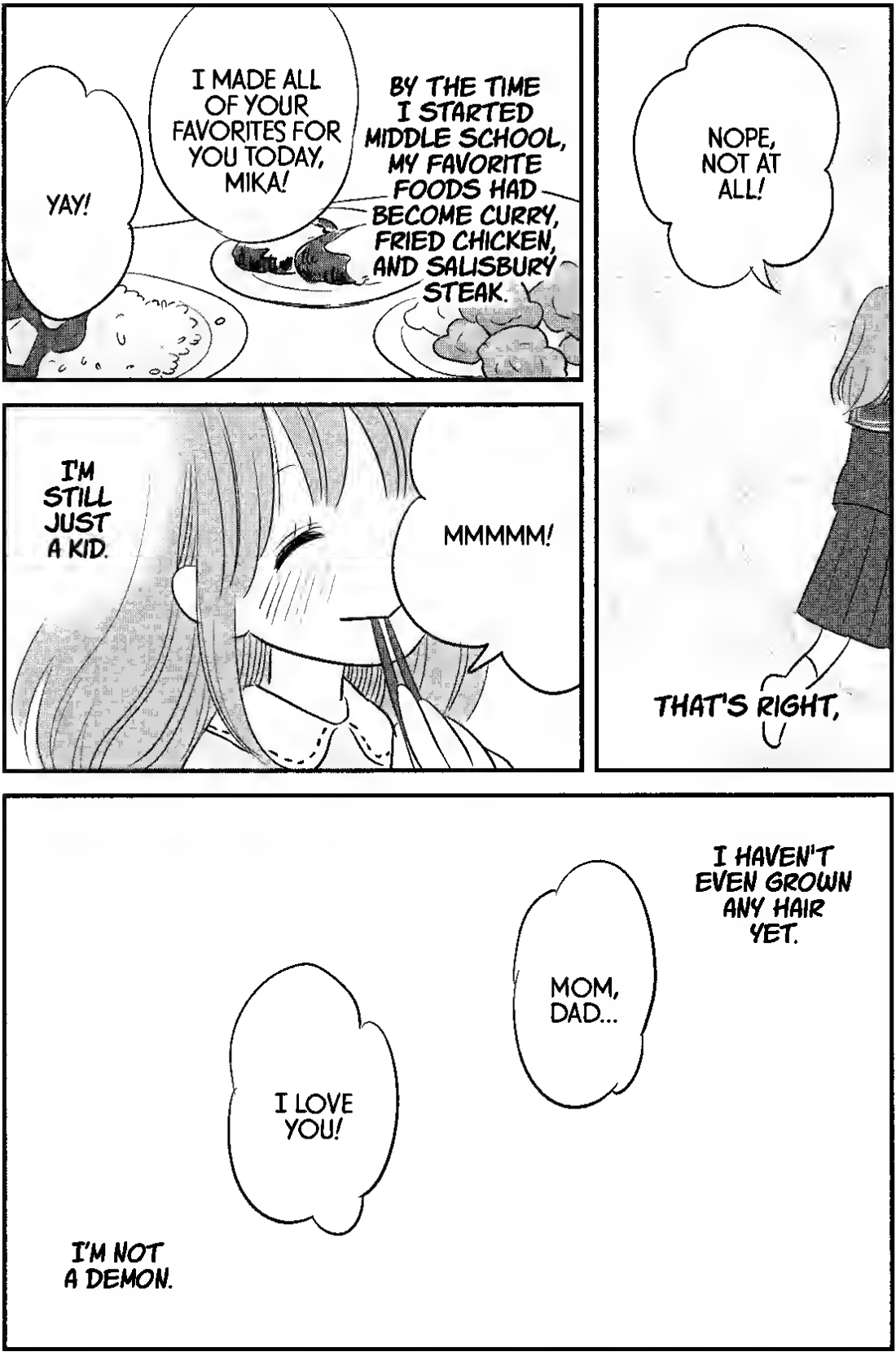
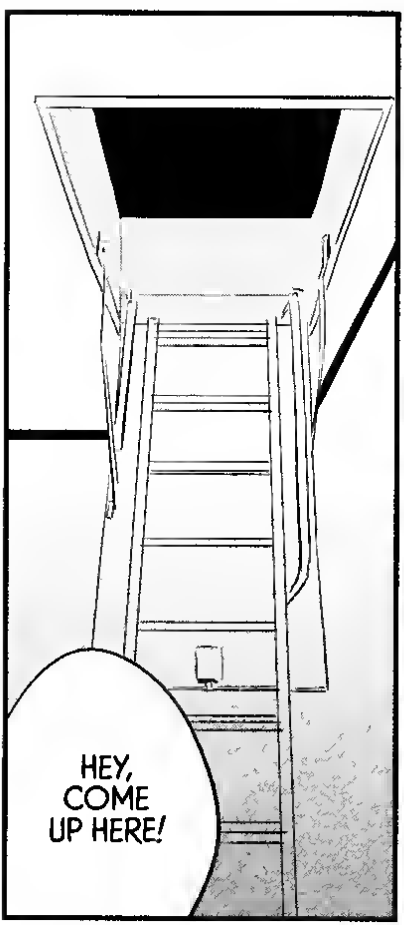
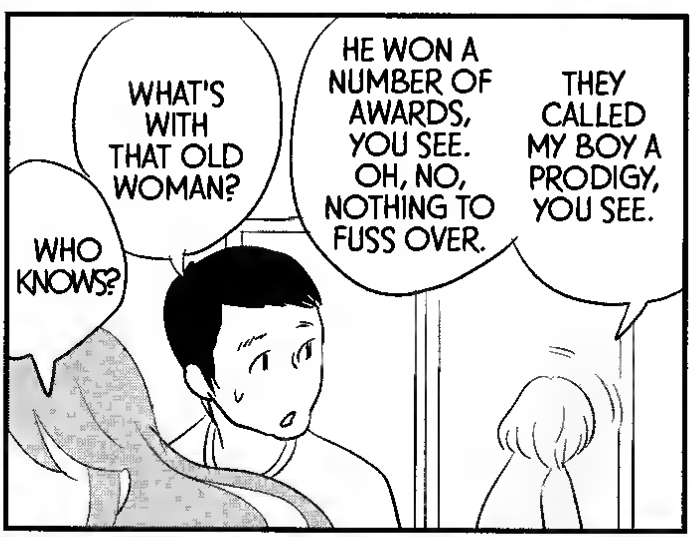
うん
Is he crying?
YOU'RE BECOMING AN ADULT NOW.


YAY!
I MADE ALL OF YOUR FAVORITES FOR YOU TODAY, MIKA!
BY THE TIME I STARTED MIDDLE SCHOOL, MY FAVORITE FOODS HAD BECOME CURRY, FRIED CHICKEN, AND SALISBURY STEAK.
I'M STILL JUST A KID.
MMMMM!
NOPE, NOT AT ALL!
THAT'S RIGHT,
I HAVEN'T EVEN GROWN ANY HAIR YET.
MOM, DAD...
I LOVE YOU!
I'M NOT A DEMON.

WELCOME.
MY, MY, A GUEST?

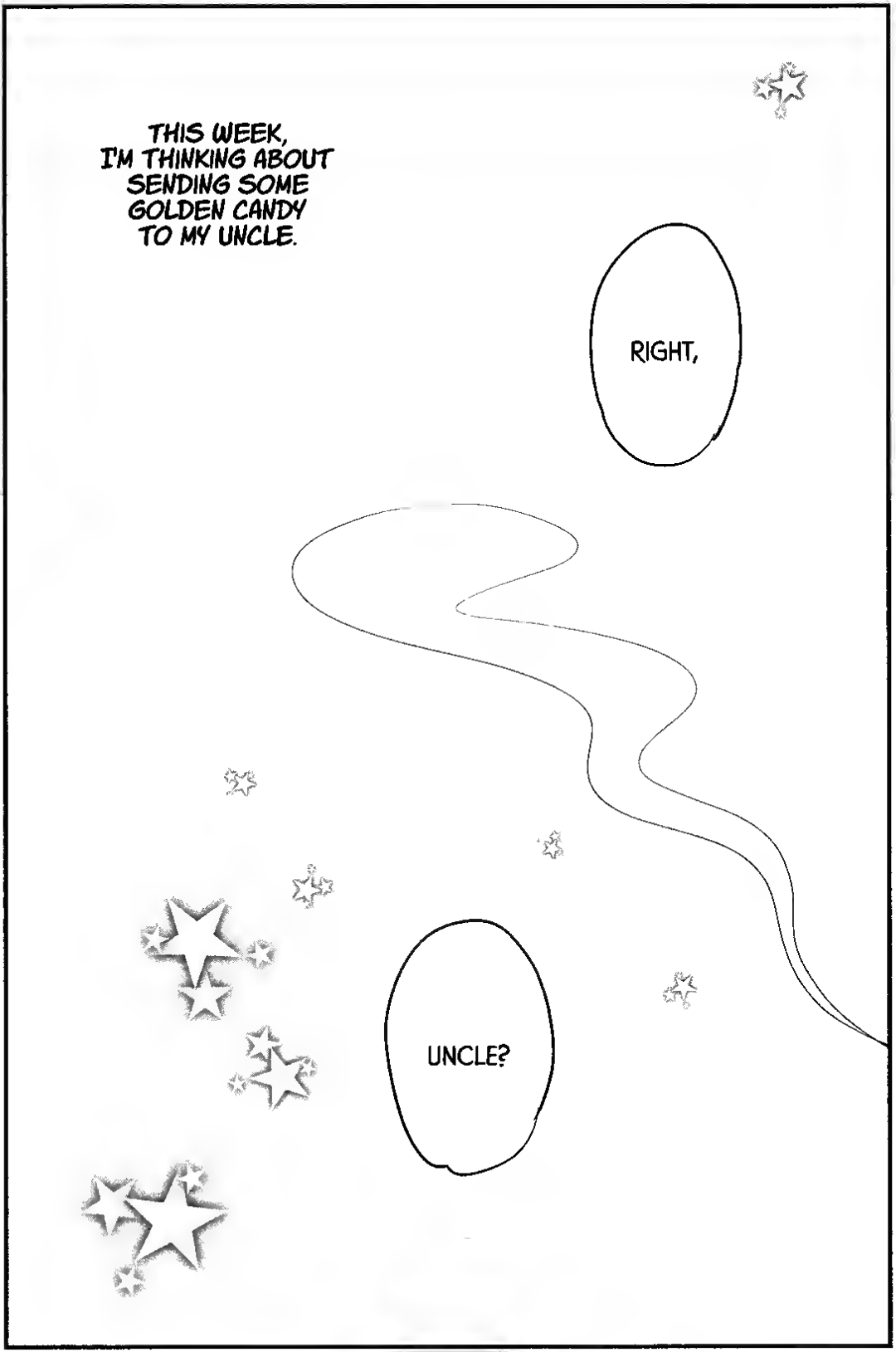
HERE?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.


HEY, COME UP HERE!


WHO KNOWS?
WHAT'S WITH THAT OLD WOMAN?
HE WON A NUMBER OF AWARDS, YOU SEE. OH, NO, NOTHING TO FUSS OVER.
THEY CALLED MY BOY A PRODIGY, YOU SEE.

MAYBE SHE'S SOMETHING LIKE A GHOST.

YOU'RE A STRANGE PERSON, YOU KNOW THAT?
I'M JUST A NORMAL WOMAN.
EVEN IF, THEY DO TURN ME INTO AN ADULT.
EVERY NOW AND THEN, I STEAL SOME OF GRANDPA'S CIGARETTES.


THIS WEEK, I'M THINKING ABOUT SENDING SOME GOLDEN CANDY TO MY UNCLE.
RIGHT,
UNCLE?

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